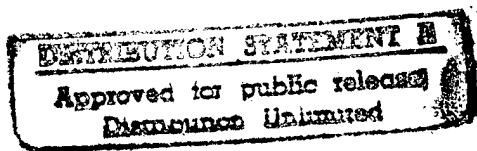


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INTERNATIONAL PEACE OPERATIONS

AND CONFLICT RESOLUTION



by

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Department of State

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## ABSTRACT

TITLE: International Peace Operations and Conflict Resolution

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The international, multipower community of the 21st century is being confronted by an epidemic of regional conflicts which are unique and disparate in their character and origins. When the complexities of the original conflicts are linked with the many-faceted aspects of international involvement, the difficulties of conflict containment and resolution are compounded. The global community lacks a consistent philosophy, be it diplomatic practice or military doctrine, for conflict resolution, and the approach to settling such conflicts has been characterized by contradiction and fluidity.

This paper will review the traditional and current nature of one type of conflict resolution -- that of international peace operations. It will examine in detail two United Nations peace actions -- in El Salvador and the former Yugoslavia -- looking at the elements that have driven these conflicts and the activities employed to resolve them. From these experiences, some of the factors that influence international conflict resolution are identified and discussed.

## BIOGRAPHICAL SKETCH

Anita G. Schroeder has been employed by the Department of State as a Foreign Service Officer since 1984. She has served with the Department in Washington, D.C., as well as in Romania, Egypt, Pakistan and Mali. She received a B.S. from Baker University in mathematics and foreign language; an M.S. from Kansas State University in statistics and demography; and a Ph.D. from Oregon State University in statistics. Before joining the Department of State, she worked for Westat Research in Rockville, Maryland, where she was Director of Social Services Research. Dr. Schroeder is a graduate of the Air War College, class of 1995.

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## **I. Introduction**

The international, multipower community that is entering the 21st century is being confronted by an epidemic of regional conflicts which are unique and disparate in their character and origins. When the complexities of the original conflicts are linked with the many-faceted aspects of international involvement, the difficulties of conflict containment and resolution are compounded. The global community lacks a consistent philosophy, be it diplomatic practice or military doctrine, for conflict resolution, and the approach to settling such conflicts has been characterized by contradiction and fluidity.

This paper will review the traditional and current nature of one type of conflict resolution -- that of international peace operations. It will examine in detail two United Nations peace actions -- in El Salvador and the former Yugoslavia -- looking at the elements that have driven these conflicts and the activities employed to resolve them. From these experiences, some of the factors that influence international conflict resolution are identified and discussed.

Peace operations in El Salvador and the former Yugoslavia were chosen as examples because the two illustrate many of the complicating factors of international involvement and intervention. The El Salvador peacekeeping operation is generally considered a success, while the peace enforcement activities in the former Yugoslavia are currently regarded as a failure. These and other conflicts present diverse and dissonant challenges to the international community as it determines its role in conflict resolution.



## **II. The Nature of Peace Operations**

### **Traditional Peacekeeping Activities**

In the cold war years, United Nations peacekeeping efforts traditionally took place only after a cease-fire had been arranged. Such missions were based on the consent and cooperation of the fighting parties, and usually on the premise that the use of force by peacekeeping troops would be limited to cases of self-defense?<sup>1</sup> Benjamin Wittes notes that two types of UN intervention have historically proven effective. One is the use of lightly-armed multinational troops operating under restrictive rules of engagement to uphold truces once the combatants themselves have agreed to stop fighting. This approach was followed in the Sinai, Cyprus, the Golan Heights, and the Western Sahara. The second successful type of UN intervention involves the use of peacekeepers to implement armistices and supervise elections after civil wars have ended, as was done in Namibia, El Salvador and Cambodia.<sup>2</sup>

### **Post-Cold War Peace Operations**

In the post-cold war environment, new forms of conflict and disorder - based on militant nationalism, hypernationalism, and transnationalism -- are emerging.<sup>3</sup> They include unforeseen and widespread outbreaks of low-level violence, increased civil war and ethnic conflict, and formidable economic and social problems.<sup>4</sup>

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<sup>1</sup> Brian Urquhart, "Who Can Police the World?" *The New York Review*, May 12, 1994:29.

<sup>2</sup> Benjamin Wittes, "The Politics of Peacekeeping," *The New Leader*, May 9-23, 1994:10.

<sup>3</sup> James B. Steinberg, "Sources of Conflict and Tools for Stability: Planning for the 21st Century," *U.S. Department of State Dispatch*, July 11, 1994:464.

<sup>4</sup> Urquhart, 29.

These situations do not conform to the "traditional" settings of peace operations. and there is a new complexity to the peacekeeping situation. The international community is finding that it is "far more difficult to inject UN peacekeeping forces into active civil wars in which no government has invited them, the fighting factions are unwilling to cooperate with the UN forces, and there is little possibility of bringing political or other pressure to bear on those factions."<sup>5</sup> UN experiences in Somalia, Bosnia, and Rwanda typify the new forms of peace operations, in which fighting among local combatants often continues after UN intervention.

As the situations needing resolution have become more complex, so too has the peace operation changed. Peace missions have begun to use force, and the participants may not always be impartial observers. Peace operations may also include civilian humanitarian workers along with military personnel, and the resulting concurrent activities have become "armed humanitarian intervention."<sup>6</sup>

The use of soldiers and relief workers in combined operations raises additional concerns. They are not always natural colleagues, and there are questions about who controls where aid should go and to whom.<sup>7</sup>

In addition, opposition among local inhabitants to the presence of outside military troops may lead to violence, thereby threatening the safety of the humanitarian workers. Concern for the safety of these workers, as well as for the safety of peacekeeping troops, may then preclude the use of force by the peacekeepers against

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<sup>5</sup> Urquhart, 29.

<sup>6</sup> "Trotting to the Rescue: United Nations Peacekeeping," *The Economist*, June 25, 1994:20.

<sup>7</sup> "Trotting to the Rescue: United Nations Peacekeeping," 20.

the violence. For example, the use of NATO air strikes in Bosnia that would enforce restrictions on the combatants and that would also endanger international personnel has been questioned.<sup>8</sup>

Moral and ethical concerns also arise. The use of international troops in Bosnia to enforce a possible future cease fire has been discussed. Is the use of these forces to police an unjust partition and reward acts of genocide morally justified?<sup>9</sup> If the objectives for intervention are unclear or not well understood, as in Somalia, how do we rationalize the loss of more lives? As the situations become more perplexing, the moral and ethical concerns will grow correspondingly larger.

Finally, the legality of international intervention in sovereign territory is at issue. The global community has not clearly defined the extent of the autonomy of an individual country or its leadership in settling internal disputes, especially if such disputes involve the abuse or mistreatment of an ethnic or religious group. Particularly under question are the rights of national minorities within sovereign states, such as the rights of Bosnian Serbs within Bosnia, or the rights of Chechens within the larger Russian entity. The extent of sovereignty is being challenged daily by ethnic minorities, and the response of the international community may be one of the major defining aspects of the next millennium.

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<sup>8</sup> Urquhart, 30.

<sup>9</sup> Question from Congressman Christopher H. Smith. "U.S. Participation in United Nations Peacekeeping Activities," Hearings Before the Subcommittee on International Security, International Organizations and Human Rights of the Committee on Foreign Affairs, House of Representatives. One Hundred Third Congress, First Session, June 24, September 21, and October 7, 1993:89.

## **Types of Peace Operations**

Traditional "peacekeeping" has been expanded to include generally four types of missions, which are grouped under the wider rubric of peace operations:

**Peacekeeping** - Missions which take place after cease-fires have been arranged, with the consent and cooperation of the fighting parties, and usually based on the premise that the use of force will be limited to self-defense.<sup>10</sup>

**Peace Enforcement** - Peace operations involving the likelihood of combat or the presence of combat units,<sup>11</sup> or "the commitment of forces to end hostilities and compel the belligerents to seek peaceful solutions to their differences."<sup>12</sup>

**Preventive Deployment** - The use of military force to avert a potential crisis.

**Nationbuilding** - Efforts to assist countries in developing infrastructures for political, economic, logistical, military, civil and other activities.

The terms "peacemaking" and "peace-building" are also in current usage. For the purposes of this paper, "peacemaking" is considered to be those diplomatic negotiations and other activities that lead to a cease-fire. Thus, peacemaking can lead to, or as in the case of Bosnia, can occur simultaneously with, peace enforcement. Also for the purposes of the paper, "peace-building" is considered to be a combination of peacekeeping and nationbuilding.

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<sup>10</sup> This definition makes use of the phraseology of Benjamin Wittes. Peacekeeping as traditionally practiced by the United Nations is also intended to be nonpartisan.

<sup>11</sup> This definition is based roughly on that by Madeleine K. Albright. "The Clinton Administration's Policy on Reforming Multilateral Peace Operations," *U.S. Department of State Dispatch*, May 16, 1994:317.

<sup>12</sup> Congressman Tom Lantos, Opening Statement, "U.S. Participation in UN Peacekeeping Activities," 65.

### **III. United Nations Peace Operations in El Salvador**

Two examples of international peace operations will be examined in detail in this paper. The first is the United Nations Observer Mission in El Salvador, or ONUSAL, formed in 1991 to help end the twelve-year-old civil war. Before the ONUSAL activities are described, some of the history of both El Salvador and its civil war will be reviewed. Neither the civil war nor the conflict resolution process can be analyzed and interpreted without an understanding of historical events and their impact on the lives and thoughts of the Salvadoran people.

#### **Historical Background**

Conflict has long been a part of life in El Salvador. In the sixteenth century, Spanish conquistadores encountered fierce opposition from the Indian population when they arrived in the new world, and Indian revolts in El Salvador occurred sporadically through the ensuing centuries, often focused on land reform.<sup>13</sup> The rich volcanic soil in El Salvador was used by the incoming elite to grow first indigo and later coffee, bringing suffering to those who worked the land, and riches to the colonialists.<sup>14</sup> The division between rich and poor was firmly marked.

In the 20th century, a young El Salvadoran Communist leader named Agustin Farabundo Marti spent several years with Nicaraguan rebel leader Augusto Cesar Sandino before returning to El Salvador to become one of the leaders of an ill-fated 1932 peasant revolt. The uprising led to the deaths of about 100 landowners before the National Guard was allowed to slaughter some 20,000 people in retaliation. Farabundo

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<sup>13</sup> Clifford Krauss, *Inside Central America*, (New York: Summit Books, 1991), 59.

<sup>14</sup> Krauss, 60.

Marti was killed by a government firing squad. The massacre, known as La Mantanza, had two significant results. First, the event put the military firmly in power, where it remained until just recently. Second, following the massacre, many Indians renounced their language, dress and culture for self protection.<sup>15</sup> The hatred of the military and the ethnic resentment are a part of life in El Salvador today.

Ideas and ideals still separated the Salvadoran people. Land reform was a goal of the Communists and others, who wanted to ease the stranglehold of poverty on the general population. The rightist elements, wary of Marxism, tried and failed to initiate reforms from the top down, using martial law and strong repressive measures. The political elite, fragmented themselves between conservative and liberal alternatives, could barely function, let alone bring about widespread social change and reforms. The economic infrastructure remained fragile. Poverty and political unrest grew.<sup>16</sup>

In the 1970's, the government and the left were further polarized when guerrilla attempts to block elections, bomb police stations and seize radio stations were followed by government terrorization of the peasants, with alleged massacres.<sup>17</sup> The insurgents began kidnapping wealthy persons for ransom, amassing an estimated \$70 million to aid their cause.<sup>18</sup> Abduction, bank robbery and death threats from the leftist groups were countered by "self-defense" organizations (the precursors of the "death-squads")

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<sup>15</sup> Krauss, 62.

<sup>16</sup> Steffen W. Schmidt, "El Salvador's Prolonged Civil War," *Prolonged Wars* (Department of Defense, 1993), 319.

<sup>17</sup> Schmidt, 321.

<sup>18</sup> The Salvadoran rebels contributed \$10 million of their ill-gotten gains to the Sandinistas in Nicaragua. Krauss, 68.

from the usually right-wing landowners and merchants, as well as by violence from the regular army.<sup>19</sup>

In the late 1970's and early 1980's, the division between right and left in El Salvador widened, and internal violence escalated. Another military coup occurred in El Salvador in 1979. In March of 1980, Archbishop Oscar Romero was assassinated, reportedly by an agent of the far-right ARENA (Alianza Republicana Nacionalista) party. That same year, the National Guard (part of the government security forces) killed four American church women, and the National Guard chief of investigations was himself gunned down by leftist elements.<sup>20</sup> Outside the country, the Sandinistas overthrew Anastacio Somoza in Nicaragua in 1979, thus encouraging the Salvadoran rebels that success was possible. The election of Ronald Reagan as president of the United States in 1979 signaled a strong stance against the Soviet "evil empire" and heartened the Salvadoran government. Political, financial and military resources were available to both sides.<sup>21</sup> "Reconciliation, reform and peace became unacceptable to both the extreme right and the extreme left."<sup>22</sup>

### **Civil War in El Salvador**

The Farabundo Marti National Liberation Front (FMLN), named for the Communist martyr who was killed by firing squad in 1932, was a coalition of five Marxist rebel armies, each controlling its own territories and each operating a network of

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<sup>19</sup> Schmidt, 321.

<sup>20</sup> Schmidt, 324.

<sup>21</sup> Schmidt, 325.

<sup>22</sup> Schmidt, 324.

peasant, union and student organizations.<sup>23</sup> With around 6000 members, the goal of the FMLN was to gain power by force of arms,<sup>24</sup> and it fought the war "in the name of the poor."<sup>25</sup>

The Salvadoran army, about fifty-five thousand troops, vastly outnumbered the FMLN, but was never able to defeat it decisively.<sup>26</sup> The government forces included the National Guard, the National Police and the Treasury Police,<sup>27</sup> who were associated with the death-squads, vigilante groups and terrorism.

For over a decade, the two sides struggled for control of El Salvador, a country about the size of Massachusetts with a population of around five million. What little physical, productive and social infrastructure there was in El Salvador was badly damaged during the war, perhaps to the value of around \$1.5 billion.<sup>28</sup>

The war years were marked with personal violence, just as earlier years had been. Far-rightist death-squads terrorized the people. Torture and mutilation of victims were common, and intimidation was a tactic used by both sides. "Both the government and the guerrillas went into villages carrying lists of suspected opponents and executed those whose names appeared on the lists."<sup>29</sup> In the "sick society" of El Salvador, the

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<sup>23</sup> Krauss, 55.

<sup>24</sup> Joseph G. Sullivan, "How Peace Came to El Salvador," *Orbis*, Winter 1994, 85.

<sup>25</sup> Krauss, 55.

<sup>26</sup> Sullivan, 84.

<sup>27</sup> Krauss, 55.

<sup>28</sup> Kraus, 22.

<sup>29</sup> Schmidt, 324.



government refused to prosecute death-squad leaders.<sup>30</sup> El Salvador became indeed "a nation of betrayal and terror, where military strongmen, wealthy oligarchs, and village thugs seek final solutions of one political extreme or another."<sup>31</sup>

Throughout the 1980's, the violence continued. Sporadic attempts to resolve the fighting were unsuccessful. In 1989, the Salvadorans overwhelmingly elected the ARENA-party candidate, Alfredo Christiani, as the new president, even with the strong link between ARENA and the hated death-squads.<sup>32</sup> Following the election, President Christiani agreed to restart peace talks, but they were subsequently cancelled after the far-right bombing of a leftist labor federation office killed ten people. The FMLN then launched a massive attack on San Salvador, the capital, which resulted in the deaths of more than 2000 people.<sup>33</sup>

The war had grown out of an environment of political elites who were fragmented and polarized between the right and the left, out of a fragile economy devastated by economic crises, and out of a twist of fate that brought about the convergence at that point in time of cold war superpower intentions and Latin American revolutionary ideas. The war had fed on its own violence, and on the support of extra-national elements for both sides.<sup>34</sup> Traditions of violence were also a factor, as were the long-standing

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<sup>30</sup> Krauss, 56.

<sup>31</sup> Krauss, 57.

<sup>32</sup> In electing an ARENA candidate, the Salvadorans voted "for the party founded by a man linked to the murder of their popular archbishop" only nine years before. Krauss speculates that "in a society where the law has never been respected, peasants identify with the man with the pantalones (pants) or huevos (balls), the strongman who can resolve the country's war." Krauss, 104.

<sup>33</sup> Schmidt, 331.

<sup>34</sup> Schmidt, 335.

attitudes of the wealthy elite toward the poor -- and poorly-educated -- Mestizo population. There were no "democratic means to address the deep social, political, economic and cultural roots of the Salvadoran people,"<sup>35</sup> and when the opposition parties coalesced into the FMLN, the government was too corrupt and too inept to defeat the FMLN or to resolve the situation through the political process.

### **Salvadoran Peace Initiatives**

By 1991, an estimated 100,000 people, perhaps 2% of the entire population, had been killed in the civil war in El Salvador.<sup>36</sup> Another 20% of the population had been displaced. Outside of El Salvador, the world was changing. With the end of the Cold War and the dissolution of the Soviet Union, funding and support for the FMLN was drying up. Washington support for the Salvadoran government was lukewarm in light of the ARENA victory. Inside El Salvador, political and social reforms had been enacted and some grievances addressed, deflating the original passions of the war. In addition, the "nonviolent center," or those who had tired of violence as a way of life, had expanded, eroding support from the right and left. Means had been developed for both the rightist and leftist elements to have a role in the political process. Finally, all parties were "exhausted by the years of struggle in which neither side was able to win a decisive victory."<sup>37</sup>

In this atmosphere, peace talks could, and did, begin. The negotiations started in September 1989 "when the two parties [the government and the FMLN] agreed to

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<sup>35</sup> Sullivan, 97.

<sup>36</sup> Schmidt, 332.

<sup>37</sup> Sullivan, 83.

initiate a dialogue aimed at ending the armed conflict in El Salvador by political means.”<sup>38</sup> The United Nations and then-Secretary-General Javier Perez de Cuellar took an active role as intermediaries in the negotiation process. In July 1990 in San Jose, Costa Rica, the government of El Salvador and the FMLN signed an agreement on human rights.

In May 1991, the United Nations formed the UN Observer Mission in El Salvador (ONUSAL) to monitor agreements concluded between the El Salvador government and the FMLN, including the San Jose human rights agreement. The mission was, said the UN, “a complex operation for which no precedent exists in the annals of the United Nations.”<sup>39</sup> A cease-fire had not been achieved, usually a prerequisite to any UN peacekeeping mission. In addition, ONUSAL was the first UN peacekeeping mission to place special emphasis on human rights.<sup>40</sup> Further, while acknowledging an “indubitable” international dimension to the armed conflict in El Salvador, the UN noted that the war had been “primarily and ultimately” an internal conflict, “not normally the kind of issue into which the UN was drawn.”<sup>41</sup>

### **United Nations Negotiations in El Salvador**

From 1991 through 1994, negotiations between the Salvadoran government and the FMLN continued. In April 1991 in Mexico City, the parties agreed on a package of constitutional reforms. In December 1991, following 20 months of on-again, off-again

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<sup>38</sup> *UN Chronicle*, December 1991, 30.

<sup>39</sup> *UN Chronicle*, March 1991, 60.

<sup>40</sup> *UN Chronicle*, September 1991, 23.

<sup>41</sup> *UN Chronicle*, June 1992, 30.

peace talks under UN auspices, the two parties agreed to terms for cease-fire and an end to the war.<sup>42</sup>

In December 1992, the two sides held a ceremony in San Salvador to mark the formal end to the war. Delays had been encountered in implementing the peace accords. Only 40 percent of FMLN combatants had returned to civilian life as of October 19, 1992.<sup>43</sup> The FMLN had not provided a final inventory of weapons, and had not completed the destruction of its weapons by the agreed deadline. The government of El Salvador had not "purified" its armed forces as scheduled, relieving of duty those individuals who had committed human rights abuses. In May 1993, an FMLN weapons cache was discovered in Nicaragua in violation of the accords. However, by mid-1993, the UN was able to report that the FMLN had been "effectively dismantled"; that destruction of FMLN weapons had been completed; that 15 high-ranking Salvadoran armed forces officers had been placed on leave, to be retired by December 1, 1993 in accordance with the recommendations on the "purification" of the military; and that President Christiani had replaced the Defense Minister and had ordered a complete reorganization of the armed forces command.

#### **The United Nations Observer Mission in El Salvador (ONUSAL)**

The ONUSAL mission was formed in 1991 to verify compliance with the San Jose human rights accord. Once the cease-fire was in place, the ONUSAL mandate was widened to include the establishment of a military division to verify cease-fire

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<sup>42</sup> *UN Chronicle*, March 1992, 50.

<sup>43</sup> *UN Chronicle*, March 1993, 67.

arrangements, and a police division to monitor the maintenance of public order pending the formation of the new national civil police.<sup>44</sup>

In 1993, the UN approved an electoral division for ONUSAL to monitor the March 1994 national elections in El Salvador. The mandate of the new division was to "observe, during the pre-election period, political meetings and demonstrations, follow up electoral advertising and reporting in the media, as well as receive complaints before and during polling, and monitor election irregularities."<sup>45</sup> The mandate for ONUSAL was extended to November 30, 1993; then to May 31, 1994; and later to March 31, 1995. In addition to election monitoring, the UN Security Council cited concern over "continuing problems and delays" in implementing the peace accords, including obstacles in implementing the land transfer program, and slowness in reintegrating into society ex-combatants of both sides.<sup>46</sup>

For the March 1994 elections in El Salvador, in which ARENA's Calderon Sol became the new president, ONUSAL deployed 900 observers of 56 nationalities who covered all polling centers. The Secretary-General reported that "there had been no significant manipulation of the election," although ONUSAL observers noted some irregularities.<sup>47</sup>

The size of ONUSAL was reduced following the election. The electoral division was disbanded, and the military component was reduced from 368 persons to 12 by the end of May 1994. The final ONUSAL tasks are focused on completing the land transfer

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<sup>44</sup> *UN Chronicle*, June 1992, 50.

<sup>45</sup> *UN Chronicle*, September 1993, 23.

<sup>46</sup> *UN Chronicle*, March 1994, 74.

program, incorporating the new National Civil Police, and providing assistance to the Salvadoran National Council for the Defense of Human Rights, which is to take over human rights responsibilities when ONUSAL is withdrawn.<sup>48</sup>

### **Commissions Which Oversaw the Human Rights, Police and Other Issues**

In addition to the main ONUSAL group, there were three other commissions formed during the negotiation stage to oversee various activities. These commissions played an important role in the peace process, and are briefly described here.

The Truth Commission was established in 1991 upon agreement by both sides in the negotiations to "investigate particularly grave cases of violence that have occurred since 1980."<sup>49</sup> The commission received more than 22,000 complaints of serious acts of violence, and following its investigation, called for the immediate removal from their present posts of individuals, including both government and FMLN leaders, who were responsible for serious human rights abuses.<sup>50</sup> The recommendations of the commission are still being implemented.

The Ad Hoc Commission was established to "identify and discharge Salvadoran military officers accused of human rights violations."<sup>51</sup> The commission, part of the "purification" process for the armed forces, reviewed the records of active duty officers for possible human rights abuses and evaluated the professional competence of each

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<sup>47</sup> *UN Chronicle*, September 1994, 49.

<sup>48</sup> *UN Chronicle*, September 1994, 48.

<sup>49</sup> Sullivan, 92.

<sup>50</sup> *UN Chronicle*, June 1993, 27.

<sup>51</sup> Sullivan, 90.

officer.<sup>52</sup> The commission recommended that 76 officers be discharged and 26 transferred to other functions.<sup>53</sup> Most of the recommendations were implemented, and the UN announced that the Salvadoran government was "in broad compliance" with the recommendations by the end of 1993.

The National Commission for the Consolidation of Peace (Comision de Paz - COPAZ) was established by the United Nations to help supervise implementation of the peace accords. It included participants from the Salvadoran government, the armed forces, the FMLN, and the other political parties. One of its principal contributions was to provide the FMLN with a means for observing implementation of the peace process agreements following the cease-fire.<sup>54</sup> Reports from the Truth Commission, for example, were given to COPAZ to allow the members to track events related to human rights.

### **The Nature of International Involvement in the Peace Process in El Salvador**

In December 1989, the FMLN was pressured by participants at the Central American Summit in Costa Rica to cease hostilities and begin a dialogue with the Salvadoran government.<sup>55</sup> The "Four Friends of the Secretary-General" (Mexico, Venezuela, Colombia, and Spain) were active in encouraging both sides to come to a final agreement as quickly as possible, in assisting peacekeeping forces, and in aiding in the verification and fulfillment of the accords.<sup>56</sup> In 1991, when frustration over the

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<sup>52</sup> *UN Chronicle*, December 1992, 35.

<sup>53</sup> *UN Chronicle*, June 1993, 26.

<sup>54</sup> Sullivan, 93.

<sup>55</sup> Sullivan, 85.

<sup>56</sup> Sullivan, 86.

slow progress of peace negotiations was high, the Four Friends were effective in communicating with both sides to urge them not to introduce new demands and to show progress in carrying out accords that had already been reached.<sup>57</sup>

The Four Friends of the Secretary-General and the participants in the Central American Summit were not superpowers imposing their will on a smaller country, but were neighbors who brought similar experiences and objectives to bear on an issue with strong regional repercussions. They could sympathize, cajole, persuade and pressure, and they worked with both sides in the Salvadoran conflict.

### **The Situation Today in El Salvador**

The outcome of the 1994 elections in El Salvador showed that the country is functioning in relative peace as a democracy. President-elect Calderon Sol acted quickly to hold meetings with the opposition party to reassure them of his interest in the reform of the electoral system, the distribution of land, the creation of the National Civil Police, and the reform of the judiciary.<sup>58</sup>

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<sup>57</sup> Sullivan, 93.

<sup>58</sup> "Salvadorean Voters Give Calderon Sol a Two-to-One Victory Over Zamora," *Latin American Weekly Report*, May 5, 1994, 181.



#### IV. United Nations Peace Operations in the Former Yugoslavia

The second peace operation to be examined is the United Nations Protection Force (UNPROFOR) in the former Yugoslavia. UNPROFOR was established in 1992 to "create the conditions of peace and security required for the negotiation of an overall settlement of the Yugoslav crisis."<sup>59</sup> Just as with the situation in El Salvador, a history of the area and the relations among the warring parties is vital to an understanding of the nature of the conflict resolution process.

The following definitions will be used:

**Nation** - The definition for this paper is the same as that given by Aleksa Djilas<sup>60</sup> of "a community of people with territory, culture and identity based on historical memories."

**Southwest Slav** - The southern Slavic languages are Bulgur, Serbo-Croatian, and Slovene. The term "southwest Slav" is used in this paper to refer to any or all of the peoples making up the former Yugoslavia, including Serbians, Croats, Slovenes, Bosnians, Montenegrins, and Macedonians. (Bulgarians are not included.) The term embraces all religions, including Orthodox Christians, Roman Catholics, and Muslims.

**Yugoslavia** - The provincial (internal) boundaries that King Alexander determined for Yugoslavia in 1929 differ from those established by Tito following World War II. They also differ from those of the Kingdom of Serbs, Croats and Slovenes formed in 1927. "Yugoslavia" in this paper refers to Tito's Yugoslavia.

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<sup>59</sup> *UN Chronicle*, June 1992, 15.

<sup>60</sup> Aleksa Djilas, *The Contested Country: Yugoslav Unity and Communist Revolution, 1919-1953* (Cambridge, Mass.: Harvard University Press, 1991 ), 189.

## Historical Background

The Slavic peoples appeared in the Balkan peninsula around 500-600 AD, moving down from the north, and following such illustrious invaders as the Celts, Romans, Greeks, Huns and Goths. Unlike the earlier invaders however, the Slavs stayed to settle the Balkan area, and have been the principal inhabitants ever since. Nevill Forbes described the original Slavs as being "a loosely-knit congeries of tribes without any single leader or central authority."<sup>61</sup> and his description could still be applied today.

Originally one race, if not one united people, the southern Slavs evolved into three main groups: Serbians, Croatians and Slovenes.<sup>62</sup> Over time, different religions and social values separated the nations further.

Christianity arrived in the Balkans around the 10th century, uniting large numbers of Slavs under a common religion. In the 11th century, the separation of the Christian church between Rome and Constantinople divided the Serbs and Croats along a line that ran north and south roughly through Bosnia. Rome controlled the west, which became largely Roman Catholic. Constantinople ruled the east, which became heavily Orthodox. The religious and geographic identity was so fused and so complete

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<sup>61</sup> Nevill Forbes, Arnold Toynbee, D. Mitrany, and D.G. Hogarth, *The Balkans, A History of Bulgaria, Serbia, Greece, Rumania and Turkey* (Oxford: The Clarendon Press, 1915), 18.

<sup>62</sup> Forbes, 79.

that the terms Serb and Orthodox became interchangeable.<sup>63</sup> Similarly, the Croats eventually came to define themselves by Catholicism.<sup>64</sup>

Also in the tenth century, the Bogomil heresy became popular among the Orthodox Balkan Slavs. Linked to the Albigensian heresy in southern France,<sup>65</sup> the Bogomil ideology encouraged adherents to deny the authority of both church and state. Many Muslims, especially those in Bosnia, are thought to have descended from adherents to the Bogomil beliefs who converted to Islam during the Ottoman occupation. In turning to Islam, the former Bogomils escaped persecution by the Orthodox church. As Muslims, they were able to maintain ownership of their property.<sup>66</sup> Orthodox Christianity became primarily a Serbian peasant religion, "while the Islamic converts became prosperous and urbanized, as they have remained to the present day."<sup>67</sup>

It was only in the 1900s that the southwest Slavs were brought together into one political entity under a Balkan power. The existence of the Serbian Empire (1168-1371) is occasionally given by the Serbs as a reason for their hegemony in the area. The Empire once ruled from the Adriatic in the west to the Maritsa River in the east, and

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<sup>63</sup> Forbes, 88.

<sup>64</sup> Alex N. Dragnich, *Serbs and Croats: The Struggle in Yugoslavia* (New York: Harcourt Brace Jovanovich, 1992), 85.

<sup>65</sup> William Pfaff, "Invitation to War," *Foreign Affairs*, Summer 1993: 102.

<sup>66</sup> Further information is located in Forbes, 35. Also, see Robin Alison Remington, "Bosnia: The Tangled Web," *Current History*, November 1993:366.

<sup>67</sup> Pfaff, 103. He also notes that "there is a marked element of class war in today's 'ethnic' war in Bosnia-Herzegovina."

from the Sava and Danube in the north to the Aegean in the south<sup>68</sup>, with a capital at Skoplje in Kosovo. Yet this empire omitted many Serb lands, including Bosnia, Croatia and Slovenia.<sup>69</sup>

The Ottoman Empire conquered most of the area inhabited by the south Slavs. Turkish rule, harsh and oppressive toward Christians, was punctuated by uprisings of the Orthodox Serbs. Many Serbs migrated to Christian areas to escape persecution by the Muslim conquerors, only to encounter worse treatment by Catholic Christians.<sup>70</sup> For 300 years, from 1496 to 1796, the Serb experience was one of persecution by Muslims and Catholics alike.

Bosnians, many of whom had converted to Islam, fared better under Turkish rule, sharing a common religion with the conquerors. Many of the Croats (largely Catholic) fled north to escape the Ottoman invasion, and settled in Hungary. Their former homes were taken over in the sixteenth, seventeenth and eighteenth centuries by migrating Serbs, also fleeing the Ottomans. The Hungarian government established a military border or *krajina* in Croatia, granting privileges to Serbs who agreed to settle and fight the Ottomans.<sup>71</sup> The descendants of these Serb settlers, the modern Serbian minority in Croatia, later fell under the rule of the Ustasha.<sup>72</sup>

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<sup>68</sup> Forbes, 95.

<sup>69</sup> Forbes, 96.

<sup>70</sup> Forbes, 105.

<sup>71</sup> Dragnich, xv.

<sup>72</sup> See page 20.

In the 1800s, the Great Powers struggled for dominion over the Balkans. Montenegro and Serbia were eventually "given" independence. Then, as now, many Serbs lived outside Serbia proper, having migrated to escape Turkish or Hungarian persecution. The territory granted to Serbia by the Great Powers did not include Bosnia and Hercegovina, both with large Serbian populations, and both occupied by Austria-Hungary. Given the distribution of the Serbian population across the Balkans, with most Serbian enclaves lacking political power and self-direction, it is not surprising that a Pan-Serb movement based on Serbian nationalist sentiment took root.

Entangled within a series of international maneuvers and entwined with Pan-Serb nationalism, the First and Second Balkan Wars occurred in 1912 and 1913. In the First Balkan War, the Serbian army and other Balkan forces succeeded in forcing the Turks out of northern and central Macedonia, as well as the northern section of Albania.<sup>73</sup> The next year, when Serbia and Greece refused to leave Macedonia, Bulgaria attacked its former allies in the Second Balkan War.<sup>74</sup> When Romania joined the struggle against Bulgaria, it was too much for the overextended Bulgarian forces, who lost the battle.<sup>75</sup> Following the Second Balkan War, Greece and Serbia kept Macedonia, then lost and regained it during both World Wars I and II.

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<sup>73</sup> Forbes, 155.

<sup>74</sup> Michael Roskin, "The Third Balkan War and How It Will End," *Parameters*, Autumn 1994, 58.

<sup>75</sup> Roskin, 58. Mr. Roskin notes that "it is for such behavior that 'Balkan War' connotes an opportunistic pile-on."

Although the Turks had been driven to the south, the Austro-Hungarian Empire still threatened the dreams of a Greater Serbian State.<sup>76</sup> In June 1914, three young Bosnians living in Sarajevo assassinated Archduke Francis Ferdinand of Austro-Hungary -- an event that sparked the beginning of the First World War. Also believed to be implicated in the conspiracy were the Serbian Black Hand leader and the Russian military attaché in Belgrade.<sup>77</sup> The ties between Russia and Serbia exist to the present day.

During World War I, Bulgaria suffered over 250,000 casualties during its occupation of Serbian and Romanian territories. Near the end of the war, Bulgaria crumbled under the Allied attack, leaving the Serbs, Croats and Slovenes free to establish a Yugoslav national council in 1918. The first Yugoslav state came into existence on October 28, 1918, with the Serbian Karageorgevich dynasty as the ruling family.<sup>78</sup>

Following the establishment of this Kingdom of Serbs, Croats and Slovenes, discussions ensued within the country about the nature of the new state. The Serbians wanted a centralized constitution and the Croats and others, a decentralized system, with mote autonomy for each "nation."<sup>79</sup> The Serbs, well-practiced in rebellion and sporadic independence, had experience in self-rule. The Croats and the Slovenes, on the other hand, had been under foreign domination until World War One. The new

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<sup>76</sup> Michael J. Lyons, *World War I, A Short History* (Englewood Cliffs, New Jersey: Prentice Hall, 1994), 55.

<sup>77</sup> Lyons. 54.

<sup>78</sup> Lyons, 355.

state chose a strong central government, with Serbians largely in control. Feuds developed between Serb and Croat faction leaders, and led to wider divisions between the two groups. In 1928, a Serbian delegate shot and killed three Croatian delegates in a parliamentary session.<sup>80</sup>

In 1929, when King Alexander disbanded parliament, abolished the constitution, and set up a de facto Serbian dictatorship, he called it Yugoslavia.<sup>81</sup> (Jugo-Slavia means South-Slavia in Serbian). The king also established new administrative districts, breaking up the traditional historical boundaries.<sup>82</sup>

King Alexander, a Serbian, was assassinated by Croatian extremists in 1934, and relations between Serbians and Croats were further exacerbated. Throughout the period between the wars, religious antagonism between Serbians (Orthodox), and Croats and Slovenes (Catholics) disrupted the Yugoslav state.

In 1941, Yugoslavia was defeated by the Axis powers and made a fascist state. The Ustasha began as an underground conspiratorial movement during the reign of King Alexander.<sup>83</sup> Later, as a terrorist movement linked to Italy, the Ustasha took over rule of Croatia, perpetrating a "genocidal assault on the Serbs."<sup>84</sup> Estimates of the numbers of people killed by the Ustasha range from 350,000 to 750,000, with the vast

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<sup>79</sup> Wesley M. Gewehr, *The Rise of Nationalism in the Balkans, 1800-1930* (New York: Henry Holt, 1931), 106.

<sup>80</sup> Gewehr, 107.

<sup>81</sup> Remington, 366.

<sup>82</sup> Dragnich, 70.

<sup>83</sup> Hugh Seton-Watson, *The East European Revolution* (London: Methuen, 1956), 78.

<sup>84</sup> Roger Cohen, "How the Serbs' Serb Began to Look Like a Diplomat," *The New York Times*, September 4, 1994:3.

majority being Serbian.<sup>85</sup> The cruelty and barbarity of the Croatian Ustasha still haunt the Serbian memory, and the Ustasha atrocities are a factor in the Serbian violence of today.<sup>86</sup>

Also during World War Two, the royalist Chetniks, consisting mostly of Serbian military who did not surrender to the Germans, established themselves in Serbia.<sup>87</sup> The Yugoslav communists, or Partisans, also largely Serbian, organized under Josip Broz Tito. The Partisans, driven from Serbia by the Chetniks, took refuge in Montenegro. While the Chetniks eventually curtailed most violent activities, due to reprisals from the occupying Nazis, the Partisans did not. The Chetniks were eventually "liquidated by the Russians and the Partisans,"<sup>88</sup> and betrayed by false promises from the United States. The Croatian Ustasha, in 1943, fearing Germany would lose the war, and fearing revenge, began to join the Partisans.<sup>89</sup> At the Teheran Conference in 1943, Tito's Partisans were chosen as leaders of Yugoslavia. The Chetnik leader, Draza Mihailovic, was executed by Tito.<sup>90</sup> Thus, the new Yugoslav government included many who hated the Chetniks and their sympathizers. Likewise, there were many Yugoslav people who hated the former Partisans.

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<sup>85</sup> Remington, 367.

<sup>86</sup> Pfaff, 104.

<sup>87</sup> Dragnich, 103.

<sup>88</sup> Dragnich, 109. The "Chetniks" have reappeared recently in another guise, this time as Serbian nationalist fighters in Bosnia. A Muslim refugee who escaped from Serbian-held Bosnia in August 1994 spoke of hiding from "Chetniks," or Serbian nationalist fighters, along the escape route. News article by Chuck Sudetic appearing in *The New York Times*, September 4, 1994:3.

<sup>89</sup> Dragnich, 110.

<sup>90</sup> Dragnich, 154.



After World War Two, Tito divided Yugoslavia into six republics: Serbia, Croatia, Slovenia, Bosnia-Hercegovina, Macedonia, and Montenegro. The boundaries were established on both national and historical principles<sup>91</sup>, and left many persons of each nationality in provinces other than their own. The Serbs in particular were scattered, possibly by intention.<sup>92</sup>

Once in power, Tito secured control of Yugoslavia through various means, including executions and arrests. These tactics "led not only to painful and costly dislocations, but also to distrust and division."<sup>93</sup> Deeper splits formed among the various national groups, especially between the Serbs and other nationalities.

### **The Breakup of Yugoslavia**

The continuity of Yugoslavia as one nation lasted through Tito's death in 1980. Remarkably, given the long and bitter past, it even continued for an additional decade. By that time, there was little that was "federal" in the former Yugoslavia.<sup>94</sup> National identities and loyalties were "the most powerful bases for political mobilization."<sup>95</sup> The government lacked a cohesive structure, and the economy was in shambles. The richer northern republics of Croatia and Slovenia resented having to support the poorer

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<sup>91</sup> Djilas, 161.

<sup>92</sup> Tito was half Croat, and half Slovene. Dragnich, disagreeing somewhat with Aleksa Djilas, states that Tito's selection of republics was based on political rather than ethnic or national factors. For example, Dragnich states that Tito formed Montenegro to repay those who aided the Partisans during World War Two. (Dragnich, 122).

<sup>93</sup> Dragnich, 155. Dragnich went on to say that Tito's demolition of the moral fiber of the south Slavs might be his most enduring legacy.

<sup>94</sup> Steven L. Burg, "Why Yugoslavia Fell Apart," *Current History*, November 1993:357.

<sup>95</sup> Burg, 357.

southern republics, as well as the largely Serbian federal army.<sup>96</sup> The Council of Europe in October 1991 recognized the republics of Yugoslavia as "sovereign and independent with [an] international identity," thus foreshadowing the breakup of the federation. In addition, a newly-unified Germany, seeking economic expansion in the northern republics of Yugoslavia, was quietly encouraging Croatia to declare independence.<sup>97</sup>

Croatia and Slovenia declared independence from Yugoslavia in late 1991, and were recognized as independent states by the international community shortly thereafter. A seven-month war between Serbia and Croatia ended with a UN-monitored cease-fire, and a ten-day war between Serbia and Slovenia failed to prevent the secession of Slovenia.<sup>98</sup> In the early fighting, Croatia lost one third of its territory to Serbia, and Croatia has protested the UN cease-fire that effectively grants Serbia rights to that one third.

An agreement was made in early 1991 between the presidents of Croatia and Serbia to divide Bosnia between them, should the opportunity arise.<sup>99</sup> Knowing that it was at risk from its stronger neighbors, Bosnia pleaded with the international community not to recognize the secessionist republics, but to no avail.<sup>100</sup> The

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<sup>96</sup> "Bosnia: The Road to Ruin," *The Economist*, May 29, 1993, 24.

<sup>97</sup> John Pilger, "The West is Guilty in Bosnia," *New Statesman & Society*, 7 May 1993, 14. Mr. Pilger notes that following World War II, half a million Croats moved to Germany, where their emigre associations enjoy great influence.

<sup>98</sup> "Bosnia: The Road to Ruin," 23.

<sup>99</sup> Susan Woodward, "Conflict in Former Yugoslavia: Quest for Solutions." *Great Decisions*, 1994:8.

<sup>100</sup> Pilger, 14.

recognition of Croatia and Slovenia gave Bosnians the unhappy choice of staying with Serbia and Montenegro, or declaring their own independence even though unable to defend themselves.<sup>101</sup>

In February 1992, the Croats and Muslims in Bosnia's collective leadership voted for Bosnian independence, with the Bosnian Serbs refusing to vote. In March, the Serbian members of the Bosnian parliament set up their own assembly. War broke out in Bosnia in April 1992 among the Croats, Muslims and Serbs. At that time, Bosnia's population of 4.3 million was approximately 40% Muslim, 30% Serbian, and 17% Croats.<sup>102</sup>

Peace negotiations to resolve the fighting in Bosnia, now almost three years old, have been unsuccessful. Cease-fires have been made and broken so frequently that almost no one tries to keep count anymore. The war has been particularly marked by mind-numbing violence among the ethnic groups. Forced expulsions, in an attempt to establish "ethnically pure" areas, have been common. The war has left approximately 200,000 people dead or missing. Alliances change periodically among the factions -- the Serbians have publicly parted from the Bosnian Serbs, although there is evidence that the private ties still hold.<sup>103</sup> The Bosnian Muslims are hampered by at least one break-away group, which is being aided by Croatian Serbs, and which is fighting

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<sup>101</sup> "Bosnia: The Road to Ruin," 26.

<sup>102</sup> "Bosnia: The Road To Ruin," 24. The numbers do not add to 100%. Other Bosnians, fed up with national stereotyping listed themselves as Yugoslavs, Turks, Jews, gypsies, Eskimos, giraffes or lamp shades.

<sup>103</sup> Roger Cohen, "Serbs Halt Talks With Croatia, Raising Chances of a New War," *The New York Times*, February 10, 1995, A4.

against the Bosnian government. The role of the international community in this setting has been a subject of intense discussion.

## **The Challenges of International Intervention in the Former Yugoslavia**

### **The UN Protection Force (UNPROFOR) to the Former Yugoslavia**

In February 1992, the United Nations Protection Force (UNPROFOR) was established to "create the conditions of peace and security required for the negotiation of an overall settlement of the Yugoslav crisis."<sup>104</sup> The force was deployed in the spring of 1992 primarily to locations in Serbia and Croatia, with military observers in Bosnia. Originally a force of around 14,000 military, civilian and police personnel, the UNPROFOR contingent grew to around 24,000 by 1994.

The mandates of UNPROFOR multiplied in a rapid and wide-ranging fashion. First, the original mandate was extended to include full operational responsibility for the functioning and security of the Sarajevo airport,<sup>105</sup> then for the delivery of humanitarian supplies. In 1992, UNPROFOR began oversight of the "pink zones" in Croatia<sup>106</sup> and the operation of a civilian police force (UNCIVPOL) in the pink zones. The force was asked to supervise heavy weapons (combat aircraft, armor, artillery, mortars and rocket launchers), and then to monitor compliance with the ban on military flights over Bosnian airspace. Subsequently, UNPROFOR was given responsibility for overseeing the withdrawal of the Yugoslav Peoples' Army from Croatia. Later, the UN began

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<sup>104</sup> *UN Chronicle*, September 1992, 6.

<sup>105</sup> *UN Chronicle*, September 1992, 10.

monitoring border areas in Macedonia. In 1993, UNPROFOR started monitoring "safe areas" in Bosnia-Herzegovina, and was granted permission to use force "in reply to bombardments or attacks against those areas or any deliberate obstruction of protected humanitarian convoys."<sup>107</sup> With each new mandate came an increase in the size of the force and in the cost of the undertaking.

Although originally billed as a peacekeeping operation, it was clear from an early date that the real tasks of UNPROFOR were peacemaking and peace enforcement. Armed humanitarian intervention became a major part of the effort, as did protection of the Bosnian safe areas and the Croatian pink zones. Credibility was lost when UN resolutions were not enforced, particularly in Croatia where there was a lack of cooperation from both the Croatian Government and the Serbian representatives. UNPROFOR personnel were threatened, taken hostage and killed. If the principal objective of UNPROFOR was to keep the peace in order to permit negotiations to take place, it was failing dismally.

In 1994, the UN would "consider seriously whether the continuation of the force justified the UN's enormous expenditure of resources - over \$1.6 billion as of 28 February [1994] - and lives - 924 casualties, including 79 fatalities in its [UNPROFOR's] two years of existence."<sup>108</sup> The United Nations found its effort

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<sup>106</sup> UN Protected Areas (UNPAs) were established in Croatia as demilitarized zones under UN supervision. The UN later set up "pink zones," or areas in Croatia controlled by the Yugoslav Peoples' Army and populated largely by Serbs, but located outside the agreed boundaries of the UNPAs.

<sup>107</sup> Six "safe areas" were established in Bosnia in 1993 to protect the inhabitants from bombardments and attacks. They are Sarajevo, Tuzla, Zepa, Gorazde, Bihac, and Srebrenica. See *UN Chronicle*, September 1993, 14.

<sup>108</sup> *UN Chronicle*, June 1994, 26.

"overstretched and underresourced," fragmented by rushing from crisis to crisis, and neither configured nor equipped for holding territory.<sup>109</sup>

The parties in the Yugoslav conflict, while acquiescing in the presence of UNPROFOR, have certainly not embraced the concept wholeheartedly. There are currently signs of discontent with UNPROFOR, and Croatia's president, Franjo Tudjman, has demanded that UN peacekeeping forces leave that country by March 31, 1995. Whether UN forces will remain in Bosnia amid the continuing unwillingness of both sides to agree to terms of a cease-fire is also questionable.

### **Armed Humanitarian Intervention in the Former Yugoslavia**

The displacement of persons, the disruption of food and other supply systems, and the destruction of national infrastructures occurred on a wide scale in the former Yugoslavia, and led to severe shortages. By early 1993, it was estimated that almost 2.5 million refugees or internally displaced persons needed food assistance,<sup>110</sup> and humanitarian assistance became a major part of UNPROFOR activities. By July 1994, over 119,000 metric tons of supplies had been delivered to Sarajevo by the United Nations High Commission for Refugees (UNHCR) under UNPROFOR protection, making the endeavor the longest sustained humanitarian relief operation in history, surpassing in duration the 1948-1949 Berlin airlift.<sup>111</sup>

The provision of humanitarian assistance often seemed to take on more importance than did the peace negotiations, being more visible and attracting more

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<sup>109</sup> *UN Chronicle*, September 1994, 29.

<sup>110</sup> *UN Chronicle*, March 1993, 12.

<sup>111</sup> *UN Chronicle*, September 1994, 30.

media attention. In light of the lack of progress in negotiating a peaceful settlement, this attention is not surprising. Humanitarian assistance was and is the only positive effort in a maelstrom of violence, changing alliances and broken promises.

### **Human Rights and War Crimes in the Former Yugoslavia**

The degree and scale of violence in the Balkan conflict have been deplorably high, even for wartime. The UN Commission on Human Rights met in 1992 to consider how to respond to repeated "massive and grave violations" of human rights in Bosnia-Herzegovina. "Despite a high level of commitment, UN personnel were unable adequately to protect the affected population and were helpless to prevent human rights violations." It was felt that human rights violations would continue due to the "Intensity of mutual distrust and hatred" among the people in Bosnia.<sup>112</sup> This prediction has been tragically borne out in the intervening years.

In response, the United Nations formed a Commission of Experts to examine reports of alleged war crimes. In October 1994, when it held its final session, the Commission reported that it had not been able to quantify the offenses committed, but that the numbers were appallingly high and that the Commission was shocked by the "high level of victimization" and the manner in which those crimes, "particularly brutal and ferocious in their execution had been committed." The UN noted that ethnic cleansing, sexual assault and rape "had been carried out so systematically that they appeared to be a product of a policy."<sup>113</sup>

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<sup>112</sup> *UN Chronicle*, December 1992, 22.

<sup>113</sup> *UN Chronicle*, September 1994, 31.

An International Tribunal for Crimes was established in 1993 to prosecute persons responsible for serious violations of international humanitarian law committed in the former Yugoslavia since 1991. The 11-judge tribunal was intended to "have a preventive and deterrent effect in a still ongoing conflict" in the former Yugoslavia, by putting an end to the crimes, bringing to justice those responsible for the crimes, and breaking the cycle of ethnic violence and retribution.<sup>114</sup> The first person to be tried by the Tribunal outside of the former Yugoslavia for alleged war crimes pleaded innocent, and the initial stages of the trial in October 1994 were marred by hearsay evidence, translation errors, and a series of contradictory statements and affidavits.<sup>115</sup> The initial difficulties, complicated by international differences of opinion on how to proceed, indicate that justice for those who have committed crimes will not be easily gained.

### **UN Sanctions and Resolutions Regarding Yugoslavia**

International sanctions against warring parties are used to apply pressure, limit availability of arms and munitions, or merely show disapproval. The UN sanctions against the former Yugoslavia began in 1991 with a general arms embargo. These sanctions were widened in 1993 for the Federal Republic of Yugoslavia (Serbia and Montenegro) to include all inward and outbound maritime shipping.<sup>116</sup> Other sanctions banned military flights over Bosnia-Herzegovina and froze all Federal Republic of Yugoslavia (FRY) funds being held in other countries.<sup>117</sup> After the FRY agreed to stop

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<sup>114</sup> *UN Chronicle*, March 1994, 65.

<sup>115</sup> George John, "Prosecution Hunts for Case in Bosnian War Crime Trial," *Montgomery Advertiser*, October 21, 1994, 8A.

<sup>116</sup> *UN Chronicle*, March 1993, 5.

<sup>117</sup> *UN Chronicle*, September 1993, 12.



aiding the Bosnian Serbs and permitted the monitoring of the border between the FRY and Bosnia-Herzegovina, some sanctions against the FRY were suspended for 100 days, beginning September 23, 1994.<sup>118</sup>

The UN Security Council uses "resolutions" to conduct business, to authorize activities, to express opinions, or to make requests and demands. More than 60 resolutions regarding the situation in the former Yugoslavia have been passed since the conflict began in 1991. These documents have variously urged the parties to abide by cease-fires and to assure the safety of international personnel (UNPROFOR, UNHCR, CSCE, etc.), demanded an end to the fighting, imposed sanctions, enlarged the UNPROFOR mandate, and taken other action the Security Council deemed necessary. The set of resolutions urging cooperation among the warring parties and with international groups has been largely ignored by those to whom it was directed. Throughout the years of this Balkan war, the UN's inability to call to order the fighting contingents in the former Yugoslavia has made the UN appear ineffectual and weak, and has been a constant source of frustration and disappointment.

### **Peace Negotiations in the Former Yugoslavia**

Attempts to negotiate a peace in the former Yugoslavia have been largely unsuccessful. One of the major early efforts to negotiate a peace in Bosnia, worked out between September 1992 and March 1993 and commonly known as the Vance-Owen peace plan, contained four parts: constitutional principles, a military agreement, a map, and interim arrangements. All three parties (the Bosnian Government, the Bosnian

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<sup>118</sup> "U.N. Eases Sanctions Against Yugoslavia, Condemns Purge," *Montgomery Advertiser*, September 24, 1994.

Croats, and the Bosnian Serbs) signed the first two portions, but the Bosnian Serbs rejected the provincial map,<sup>119</sup> and negotiations broke down. From July to September 1993, an agreement was drawn up among the three parties to establish a Union of Republics of Bosnia-Herzegovina, with each constituent republic determining its own name, and with the territory of the Muslim-majority being no less than 30 percent. In September 1993, following last-minute discussions aboard the *HMS Invincible*, the proposed agreement was rejected by the Bosnian Parliament.<sup>120</sup>

Discussions based on the *HMS Invincible* package continued through the winter of 1993-1994, the sticking points being territorial divisions and allotments. In May 1994, the Contact Group met in Geneva,<sup>121</sup> recommending the concept of a territorial compromise "based on 51 percent for the Bosnian-Croat entity and 49 percent for the Bosnian Serb entity."<sup>122</sup> Although the Bosnia Federation accepted the proposals; the Contact Ministers "concluded that the Bosnian Serb response was tantamount to a rejection."<sup>123</sup>

In December 1994, former President Jimmy Carter was instrumental in negotiating a four-month cease-fire between the Bosnian government and the Bosnian

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<sup>119</sup> *UN Chronicle*, June 1993, 8.

<sup>120</sup> *UN Chronicle*, December 1993, 31. The discussions covered exits to the sea for land-locked Bosnia, and exchanges of territory among the factions.

<sup>121</sup> The Contact Group on Bosnia is commonly described as the United States, Russia, Britain, Germany and France, although representatives of other nations, particularly Greece and Belgium, have participated in the meetings.

<sup>122</sup> "Communique on Bosnia-Herzegovina," *U.S. Department of State Dispatch*, May 30, 1994, 351.

<sup>123</sup> "Foreign Ministers Contact Group Meeting on Bosnia-Herzegovina." *U.S. Department of State Dispatch*, August 15, 1994, 553.

Serb leaders. The cease-fire is currently threatened by fighting between renegade Muslim forces and the Bosnian Government,<sup>124</sup> by evidence of active preparations on all sides for a possible wider conflict in the spring of 1995,<sup>125</sup> and by the Croatian deadline for withdrawal of UN troops by March 31, 1995, and there is scant hope that it will be permanent.

### **The Use of Force to Bring Peace to the Former Yugoslavia**

The use of force in a peace operation, for purposes other than immediate self defense, is controversial and contradictory. Confronted by a mounting death toll among UNPROFOR and international personnel, by losses of supplies and equipment, and by not a little frustration, the United Nations Security Council authorized in 1993 the use of force in reply to attacks on the safe areas in Bosnia or to deliberate obstruction of humanitarian convoys.<sup>126</sup> The use of force by UNPROFOR in self defense was also authorized in Croatia.

In February 1994, NATO reaffirmed its readiness to support the UN, and to provide close air support should the Bosnian Serb forces attack UN and relief agency personnel.<sup>127</sup> On six occasions, NATO aircraft have bombed targets in Bosnia, all of them Serbian. The Serbs responded by blockading Sarajevo and firing on the Sarajevo airport.

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<sup>124</sup> The renegade Muslim forces, who oppose the Muslim-majority government, are being assisted by Croatian Serbs.

<sup>125</sup> Roger Cohen, "Serbs Halt Talks With Croatia, Raising Chances of a New War," *The New York Times*, February 10, 1995, A4.

<sup>126</sup> *UN Chronicle*, September 1993, 14.

<sup>127</sup> *UN Chronicle*, September 1994, 29.

In the fall of 1994, the use of force against the Bosnian Serbs continued to be a contentious issue. The UN opposed the use of air strikes, while NATO and the Clinton Administration called for "a new toughness in Sarajevo" and wider air strikes in response to Bosnian Serb activities.<sup>128</sup> The issue has not been resolved.

### **International Differences of Opinion Regarding Conflict Resolution in the Former Yugoslavia**

The international community, while united in condemning the atrocities and violence that have been committed in the former Yugoslavia, is at odds over how to seek a resolution to the conflict. The NATO air strikes against the Bosnian Serbs were advocated by the Clinton Administration, but only reluctantly approved by European leaders. Even this limited use of air power caused a rift with Russia, a long-time backer of Serbia.<sup>129</sup>

The US and the European powers disagree on whether to lift the arms embargo on Bosnia. European governments, who have troops on the ground in the UN peace operation, have said that such a decision would force them to withdraw their personnel from Bosnia.<sup>130</sup> President Clinton has strongly opposed any unilateral U.S. action in this

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<sup>128</sup> Roger Cohen, "U.N. General Opposes More Bosnia Force," *The New York Times*, September 29, 1994, 7.

<sup>129</sup> Holger Jensen, "Nonsoldier as General Prospect for NATO," *The Washington Times*, September 20, 1994, 17.

<sup>130</sup> Paul Adams and Bruce Clark, "UN Threat Wins Pledge From Bosnian Muslims," *The London Financial Times*, September 20, 1994, 3.

regard, but incoming Senate majority leader Robert Dole introduced legislation advocating unilateral action, causing concern among the Europeans.<sup>131</sup>

While the United States has pushed for the war crimes tribunal, other UN members have quietly tried to limit financial support, seeing the tribunal as an impediment to the peace process. The U.S. viewpoint also differs from that of Britain and France on whether UN sanctions against Serbia should be lifted if a peace accord is signed. The U.S. opposes any easing of the sanctions if Serbia does not cooperate in the war crimes tribunal.<sup>132</sup>

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<sup>131</sup> Carla Anne Robbins and Thomas E. Ricks, "Dole Plan could Overturn U.S. Policy in Bosnia and Complicate Role in Haiti," *The Wall Street Journal*, January 4, 1995, 1/2.

<sup>132</sup> "Prosecute Bosnia's War Criminals," *The New York Times*, January 4, 1995, 18.

## V. Conflict Control and Resolution

As demonstrated by peace activities in El Salvador, the former Yugoslavia, and elsewhere, the global community lacks a consistent philosophy, be it diplomatic practice or military doctrine, for conflict resolution. As a result, the international approach to conflict resolution has been characterized by contradiction and fluidity. A policy for intervention in one instance may be disregarded in another situation. For example, humanitarian interests might attract strong international intervention in Bosnia and Somalia, but a much reduced international presence in Liberia, or none at all in Algeria. Also, the objectives of any conflict resolution process usually change over time, as they did in both El Salvador and the former Yugoslavia.

One of the reasons for the lack of a consistent philosophy is the enormous complexity of conflict resolution. Peace operations in El Salvador and the former Yugoslavia illustrate many of the complicating factors of international involvement and intervention. Although the two conflicts have certain common background characteristics,<sup>133</sup> and both peace processes have been primarily post-cold war scenarios, the El Salvador peacekeeping operation is generally considered a success, while the peace enforcement activities in the former Yugoslavia are currently regarded as a failure. One might conclude that peacekeeping will always be effective, and that peace enforcement will always involve extensive complications, but even the most casual observer would quickly set this simplistic solution aside. What about the differing objectives, commitment, and resources of all the parties involved, both the

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<sup>133</sup> Both regions have a common history of violence, domination by other powers, and religious divisions.

combatants and the interventionists? What about leadership, geography, and timing? These aspects also influence the outcome of international involvement, and are not an inherent part of the definitions of peacekeeping and peace enforcement.

What are the determining elements, then, that influence international conflict resolution? Table I at the end of this paper lists four broad issues that will have a role in any approach to conflict control and resolution, with some of the factors that constitute each issue.<sup>134</sup> The remainder of the paper focuses on a discussion of these issues.

In the following descriptions of international conflict resolution and peace operations, examples other than El Salvador and the former Yugoslavia are cited. Table II has been included to give the reader a quick reference to selected conflict situations around the globe.

### **Internal and External Conflicts**

As noted in Section II, one of the major issues facing international decision makers is the legality of intervention in sovereign territory to attempt to control or resolve internal conflicts. For such wars, there is no simple answer to the questions of whether, when and how to intervene. The breakup of Yugoslavia might have been termed a civil war, and the world might have chosen to observe rather than to participate. But as noted in Section IV, the global community was itself involved in the

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<sup>134</sup> Table I is not given as a formulaic approach to determining when the global community should become involved in conflict control and resolution. It is rather a list of factors that are common, if not always universal, in conflict situations, and it illustrates the complexity of decision-making in conflict control and resolution.

breakup of Yugoslavia, and an international flavor has characterized the ensuing conflict.

International intervention on a large scale is not the most common international approach to resolving civil wars. The global community can also react with modest intervention and mediation attempts, as it has in the Liberian civil war. Another approach is demonstrated by the international role in the Chechen civil war, which is limited to diplomatic pressure on the Russian government to end the fighting. The nature of the internal conflict, the stability and type of local government, and the probable response of all conflicting parties to outside influence are factors that will affect what kind of international involvement is selected, and how effective it can become.

External aggression against another country is much more likely than internal conflict to draw international attention and intervention. When Iraq invaded Kuwait in 1990, the global reaction was immediate intervention with overwhelming force to restore the government of Kuwait. However, there might well be other scenarios when world forces would ignore the conflict or support the aggressor, particularly if the government of the invaded or attacked country was generally disliked or distrusted. It is doubtful that the global community would support the Libyan or Sudanese governments, for example, should either be attacked by its more respected neighbors.

### **National Security Interests and Conflict Resolution**

National security interests are an ever-changing phenomenon, always open to interpretation. They can be used by various parties as reasons both for and against intervention in conflicts. National security interests were presented as part of the



decision of the international community to intervene in the conflicts in the former Yugoslavia. Situated in close proximity to western Europe, the former Yugoslavia is strongly tied, both politically and economically, to the rest of Europe. In addition, several European countries are now housing refugees of the various fighting parties, as well as large population groups of southwest Slav origin. It is argued that what happens in the former Yugoslavia affects Europe, and what affects Europe influences the rest of the world.

Few other conflicts have attracted the level of intervention now present in the former Yugoslavia. Table II shows a selection of 15 other conflicts around the world, most of which have been given less publicity and less assistance. The United States, by its intervention in Haiti, has defined the Haitian situation as significant to its national security, not only because of geographic location, but also because of refugee-created economic issues. Hostilities involving Cuba, whatever the reason, would also be interpreted as being relevant to US national security. The rebel uprising in Mexico, on the other hand, has not led to US or other intervention. The Mexican government seems to be coping with the situation, and the US goal of strengthening regional economic bonds also precludes an open display by the US of lack of confidence in the Mexican government. However, should the Mexican situation change, there is always the possibility that the United States could alter its stand and attempt to play a larger role.

### **Internal Commitment to Resolving the Conflict**

If any peace negotiation anywhere in the world is to succeed, the warring parties must replace hostility and aggression with trust and communication. The tendency to

seek solutions through warfare must be changed to a reliance on discussion, negotiation and compromise. These reforms are not easy or immediate, and they require tremendous discipline, forgiveness and commitment from the former opponents. Because of this demand for focus and dedication, peace talks are more likely to succeed when the parties have entered the negotiations at their own instigation and request, rather than when they have been forced or lured to the conference table.

"What United Nations forces cannot do is impose a settlement where none is desired," according to one writer.<sup>135</sup> Others have echoed this sentiment. A different author states that "while the international community can create conditions for peace, the responsibility for peace, ultimately rests with the people of the country in question."<sup>136</sup> Internal commitment is the key.

When negotiations began in El Salvador, all parties had been exhausted by more than a decade of civil war, and victory did not seem attainable by either side. Both sides requested United Nations involvement. Once the cease-fire in El Salvador was determined, it was scrupulously adhered to by all. In spite of the distrust and occasional reluctance of both sides to carry out the peace accords in a timely fashion, neither side violated the cease-fire. In addition, both sides showed a willingness to yield on their demands.

Conversely in the former Yugoslavia, the parties have not agreed to pursue a settlement in the absence of fighting. Cease-fires have been agreed to and broken steadily since 1991, and various peace plans have been proposed and eventually

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<sup>135</sup> Wittes, 11.

<sup>136</sup> "Keeping the Peace and Promoting Democracy," *Defense* 94, Issue 6, 17.

rejected by one party or another. The parties in the conflict in the former Yugoslavia have shown few of the attributes needed to reach a settlement, including trust, discipline, and a willingness to stop fighting. They have also been slow to accept compromise and to negotiate realistically.

There are other examples of how intransigence among the combatants can blockade a peace process, notably in Liberia and Afghanistan. Without internal commitment to bring about a peaceful resolution, there is little that the outside world can do to achieve that same end through mediation. The alternatives for the international community are then either to ignore the situation and let it burn itself out, or to resort to some form of violent compulsion. Neither approach is a comfortable one to the rest of the world.

### **International Involvement in Resolving the Conflict**

Three general areas of international conflict control and resolution are shown in Table I. These include (1) influence through pressure or other actions. (2) resolution of humanitarian concerns, and (3) active intervention. For any of these approaches to be successful, the global community must examine the situation and choose a role that helps rather than hinders the conflict resolution process.

The international community has attempted to use influence to resolve the conflicts in both Chechnya and Chiapas, with diplomatic pressure as the main mechanism. The Russian government's efforts to settle the Chechen conflict stem at least in part from the knowledge that the outcome of the Chechen negotiations will affect plans for a much-needed loan from the International Monetary Fund. A resolution of the Chiapas conflict would demonstrate the stability and control of the Mexican

government, and would likely increase world financial support during its current economic crisis.

International influence, however, is not always effective, particularly when the government involved has lost control or disregards international conventions. It is also less effective when trying to persuade guerrillas or other disaffected groups to settle a conflict.

The second area to be examined here is the resolution of humanitarian concerns. The existence of these concerns, which are often related to hunger, violence and forced migration, is sometimes given as a reason by the international community for involvement in a conflict. For example, humanitarian concerns were primary focus for international activities in Rwanda, Somalia and Bosnia. However, there are other, equally terrible humanitarian situations that do not lead to large-scale global involvement. The ethnic violence in Burundi and the atrocities committed in the Liberian conflict have generated little public concern in the outside world, and no major international involvement. Thus while decisions regarding the global role in a conflict might be related to humanitarian concerns, such concerns alone are not sufficient to bring about an international response.

Refugees constitute another problematical situation because, by definition, they are moving to another location, taking economic and social requirements with them. Their movement forces outside governments to pay attention. To prevent refugees, conflicts must be resolved or contained. If conflicts continue, then the question is not whether there are refugees, but which countries will inherit them. The US role in

restoring the Haitian government is in part an attempt to stop the flow of illegal immigrants from Haiti into the US.

The third general approach to conflict control and resolution is intervention. Peacekeeping and peace enforcement both fall into this category, as do certain types of mediation, observer missions and nationbuilding. A variety of factors can affect the intervention process. Some of those shown in Table I are discussed below.

Any intervention will be complicated by the historic "baggage" of the intervening parties. In the Yugoslav situation, for example, historical connections, national and economic interests, and immigrant community lobbying are like sticking plaster, binding countries outside the Balkans with the nations of the former Yugoslavia. The Russia-Serbia tie -- stemming from a common Slavic ancestry, from a shared orthodox religion, and from Russian sympathies when the Serbian nation was persecuted under Catholic or Muslim domination -- is long standing. The Germany-Croatia relationship, which has a basis in the World War II association between the countries, as well as in the active Croatian immigrant community now in Germany, is also a factor. These attachments have aligned the international community on one side or another. This "taking of sides" has helped internationalize the Balkan conflicts, bringing to the fore old quarrels and insecurities among the international powers.

The amount of publicity given to a conflict will affect the reaction of the international community and its leaders. The conflict in El Salvador provides an interesting example. Although many parties were involved in helping bring peace to El Salvador, these groups operated largely on a low-pressure basis, away from television cameras and reporters. The peace process in El Salvador was allowed to evolve

slowly, and the passing of time became a part of the process. It has been noted that lengthy and sometimes open-ended UN interventions "often have succeeded precisely because they alleviated tensions between the combatants over a long period and gave diplomacy a chance to work."<sup>137</sup>

In the former Yugoslavia, under the glare of the international media, and with the pressure of world opinion about war crimes, it is difficult to advocate the beneficial effects of time and patience. But a peace process lacking these aspects may be only a facade hiding the underlying tensions and resentment, and likely to collapse with the slightest tremor. Thus publicity may hasten attempts to reach peace, and may, in the end, prevent the conflict resolution process from achieving success.

The lack of a common purpose can also complicate international involvement in a regional conflict. The international differences of opinion regarding the solution of the Yugoslav dilemma were presented in Section IV. Without concurrence among the international community on how to intervene in a conflict situation, the intervention may be doomed to failure.

### **Conflict Resolution or Conflict Postponement?**

One of the more intriguing aspects of peace operations is the question of whether outside intervention, when it does occur, is beneficial and results in final resolutions to the conflicts, or whether it does more harm than good. This paper has given an example -- El Salvador -- where international involvement helped encourage a peaceful resolution of conflict. However, the intervention in El Salvador came when both sides were exhausted by a decade of fighting and when both requested

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<sup>137</sup> Wittes, 11.

assistance in pursuing peace. These factors may be more significant than any others in explaining a peaceful resolution.

The other example in this paper, that of the former Yugoslavia, shows the reverse side of the situation. It has been proposed by several writers that international intervention in the Yugoslav conflict might lead to a longer and more widespread war. Michael Roskin suggested that this war, "The Third Balkan War," could lead to a variety of situations, one of which might involve international action against Serbia. If the Serbs were forced to surrender and were left without protection, for example, the eventual result could be a wave of regional retaliation against them, ending with a UN force to protect Serbs from vengeful Croats, Bosnian Muslims, and Albanians.<sup>138</sup>

In reviewing the book *Bosnia and the Failure of the West* by David Rieff, the reviewer, Michael Ignatieff, noted the following:

Having failed diplomatically, the West then fell back on a peacekeeping strategy whose mandate was woefully inadequate to the realities on the ground. Mr. Rieff's analysis on this point is devastating. Peacekeepers were deployed when there was no peace to keep; what was called a protection force stood by while Sarajevans were picked off in the streets; safe havens were proclaimed and then left to be pounded by Serbian gunners; courageous and effective agencies like the Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees were forced to connive in ethnic cleansing, helping to escort refugees from Serb-held zones. The very presence of United Nations personnel gave western governments the excuse to avoid air strikes for fear of hitting their own people or turning them into Serbian hostages. It is just possible that the United Nations presence actually prolonged the death agonies of a whole people.<sup>139</sup>

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<sup>138</sup> Michael G. Roskin, "The Third Balkan War, and How It Will End," *Parameters*, Autumn 1994, 66.

<sup>139</sup> Michael Ignatieff, "The Hopeless War," *The New York Times Book Review*, February 26, 1995:7.

According to these authors, the approach taken by the international community could result in more death and destruction than if the situation had been left to resolve itself without outside involvement.

In any intervention scenario, care must be taken to settle the root of the conflict, rather than just addressing the symptoms. If a given conflict stems from economic imbalance or, as in the case of El Salvador, lack of reasonable land distribution, then stopping the fighting will not solve the problem. El Salvador is making strides to redistribute land, but in situations where this is not done, one can argue that the resolution is incomplete and that the conflict has only been postponed.



## **Final Comment**

The arena of peace operations is faced with more rhetoric than reason, and with more questions than answers. Clarity of purpose in resolving conflicts is lacking, and emotional baggage may be deflecting or hindering good intentions. The ideal solution would be a consistent, generally-accepted approach to intervention and conflict resolution. However, the nature of multipower politics does not offer a sympathetic environment for the development of a universal philosophy, and the conflicts themselves are so disparate as to discourage the use of common approaches. Even with a gloomy outlook for the chances of success, it is nonetheless important to continue to seek such a goal. International conflicts pose a threat to global security, both in the violence they display and in their tendency to force all other parties, players and nonplayers, to "take sides." Being involved is no longer a matter of choice.

Conflict resolution is becoming the hallmark of international affairs, and activities directed toward controlling conflicts will play a large part in how our era will be characterized. Whether history will reflect the 1990s and the first years of the new millennium as "The Era of Conflict Resolution," or perhaps "The Era of Uncontrolled Conflict," remains to be seen. The blank pages of tomorrow's history books are waiting.

TABLE I

*[Table not available]*

THIS TABLE IS NOTIONAL, AND IS NOT EXHAUSTIVE.

TABLE II

*[Table not available]*